## Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A method for programming a software component, said method comprising the steps of:

defining properties of said software component, including at least one input port and at least one output port; and

preventing said properties of said software component from being inherited by another component.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of allowing said software component to access an external environment only through said output port.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of allowing a client to access said software component only through said input port.

4. A method for programming a software component, said method comprising the steps of:

defining properties of said software component, including at least one input port and at least one output port; and

providing a software mechanism for instantiating said software component.

5. A method for connecting a first software component to a second software component providing a service, said method comprising the steps of:

defining properties of said first and second software components, including at least one input port and at least one output port;

connecting an output port of said first software component to an input port said second software component; and

ensuring said output port of said first software component matches said input port said second software component.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein said ensuring step ensures said protocols of said ports match.

7. The method of claim 5, wherein said ensuring step ensures said types of said ports match.

8. A method for posting a message to a group, said method comprising the steps of:

defining properties of at least one software component, including at least one input port and at least one output port;

registering said software component with said group; and

providing a message posted to said group to each of the software components that have registered with said group.

9. A system for programming a software component, said system comprising:

a memory that stores computer-readable code; and

a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor configured to implement said computer-readable code, said computer-readable code configured to:

define properties of said software component, including at least one input port and at least one output port; and

prevent said properties of said software component from being inherited by another component.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein said processor is further configured to allow said software component to access an external environment only through said output port.

11. The system of claim 9, wherein said processor is further configured to allow a client to access said software component only through said input port.

12. A system for programming a software component, said system comprising:

a memory that stores computer-readable code; and

a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor configured to implement said computer-readable code, said computer-readable code configured to:

define properties of said software component, including at least one input port and at least one output port; and

provide a software mechanism for instantiating said software component.

13. A system for connecting a first software component to a second software component providing a service, said system comprising:

a memory that stores computer-readable code; and

a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor configured to implement said computer-readable code, said computer-readable code configured to:

define properties of said first and second software components, including at least one input port and at least one output port;

connect an output port of said first software component to an input port said second software component; and

ensure said output port of said first software component matches said input port said second software component.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein said processor is further configured to ensure said protocols of said ports match.

15. The system of claim 13, wherein said processor is further configured to ensure said types of said ports match.

16. A system for posting a message to a group, said system comprising:

a memory that stores computer-readable code; and

a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor configured to implement said computer-readable code, said computer-readable code configured to:

define properties of at least one software component, including at least one input port and at least one output port;

register said software component with said group; and

provide a message posted to said group to each of the software components that have registered with said group.

17. An article of manufacture for programming a software component, said system comprising:

a computer readable medium having computer readable code means embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means comprising:

a step to define properties of said software component, including at least one input port and at least one output port; and

a step to prevent said properties of said software component from being inherited by another component.

18. An article of manufacture for programming a software component, said system comprising:

a computer readable medium having computer readable code means embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means comprising:

a step to define properties of said software component, including at least one input port and at least one output port; and

a step to provide a software mechanism for instantiating said software component.

19. An article of manufacture for connecting a first software component to a second software component providing a service, said system comprising:

a computer readable medium having computer readable code means embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means comprising:

a step to define properties of said first and second software components, including at least one input port and at least one output port;

connect an output port of said first software component to an input port said second software component; and

ensure said output port of said first software component matches said input port said second software component.

20. An article of manufacture for posting a message to a group, said system comprising:

a computer readable medium having computer readable code means embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means comprising:

a step to define properties of at least one software component, including at least one input port and at least one output port;

a step to register said software component with said group; and

a step to provide a message posted to said group to each of the software components that have registered with said group.